



SERMON

OF THE

RIGHT REV. JAMES VINCENT CLEARY, S. T. D.

BISHOP OF KINGSTON

ON THE

SUPERNATURAL AGENCY OF BISHOPS

MONTREAL AND TORONTO

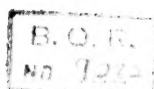
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RIGHT REV. JAMES VINCENT CLEARY, S. T. D.,
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ON THE
SUPERNATURAL AGENCY OF BISHOPS.

The following sermon was preached by the Right Rev. James Vincent Cleary, S.T.D., Bishop of Kingston, on occasion of the consecration of the Right Rev. John Thomas Dowling, Bishop of Peterborough, May the 1st, 1887, in St. Mary's Cathedral, Hamilton.

“Obey your prelates, and be ye subject unto them, for they watch as being to render an account of your souls : that they may do this with joy and not with grief.” (Hebrews 13 ch , 19 v.)

My Lords, Very Rev. and Rev. brethren of the clergy, and dear children in Christ, my address on this solemn occasion shall be directed in a general sense to you all, but with particular reference to the faithful clergy and laity of the diocese of Peterboro, who have gathered here to witness the consecration of their new bishop. The elevation of a priest to the sublime office of the Episco-

pate is an event of great importance to the Catholic Church, especially to that portion of the flock of Christ whose eternal interests are committed to his care. His consecration by sacramental rite is the preparation of his mind and heart and whole soul by the infusion of special graces and virtues for the fulfilment of the new duties laid upon him. It is truly a divine work that is done before your eyes to-day. It is nothing less than a new creation in the supernatural order. Let us implore the Father of lights to shed his rays from heaven upon us, that we may see his mysterious handiwork with full vividness of faith, and comprehend the reality of the new and Christ-like existence in which the Bishop elect shall rise from under the hands of the officiating Pontiff; and so, when the mitre of dignity shall be set on his brow, and the staff of pastoral authority put into his hand, and he shall be conducted through your midst to dispense the first fruits of episcopal benediction, you may bow down reverently in mind, as in body, and do him homage in the sincerity of your hearts as to God's ambassador entrusted with a message of salvation to you; as High Priest of the covenant of reconciliation invested with the plenary power of the great High Priest of Calvary; as an anointed Ruler in Israel, pastor of your souls, and true father of his spiritual children by communication from Him "of whom all paternity in heaven and earth is named." (Eph. 3c., 15v.)

NATURE OF THE EPISCOPAL OFFICE.

If the Episcopate were an office for which, beside legitimate appointment, nothing more were required than a just combination of priestly virtue and learning and stability of character, of zeal and prudence, of firmness of purpose and gentleness of disposition, there would be

no necessity for the venerable Archbishop and Bishops of this Province to come together here at much personal inconvenience for the sake of an empty ceremony of public investiture with the insignia of power and dignity. There would be no substance in it, certainly no true consecration ; because there would be no sacramental grace, no divine communication of power, no transforming virtue, no spiritual reality ; but only a religious pageant, calculated to impress the minds of the beholders with something like awe, perhaps with a reverential idea of the higher order of ecclesiastical dignities. But now, although the Bishop-elect of Peterboro has received his appointment from the Supreme Pastor of the whole fold of Christ, to whom, because of his sovereign jurisdiction and by express precept of the Son of God, the clergy of all grades turn, as to the centre and " source of sacerdotal unity," consequently of honor and preferment and hierarchical institution, he is not qualified to discharge the ministry of salvation for you till, like the first twelve bishops, he " be indued with virtue from on high," by the infusion of the Holy Ghost and His gifts of spiritual agency proportioned to the work to be done, which is wholly supernatural, dependent on supernatural means, and ordained to a supernatural end. All whatsoever man by his natural powers and gifts could do ; all that the wisdom and learning and eloquence and wealth and marvellous enterprise of this age could accomplish, would not suffice to save a single soul. The beatitude of heaven is a supernatural goal that cannot be reached but by paths of supernatural direction and by helps transcending the highest powers of nature. " Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what God hath prepared for those that love him." (1 Cor., 2c, 9v.)

THE EPISCOPATE IS A SUPERNATURAL AGENCY OF FAITH.

The end of Christian life being supernatural, it is evident that the means of attaining it must be likewise supernatural. And so our Lord has provided by instituting the Apostolic Hierarchy as the agency of faith through which salvation shall be wrought to the end of time for "as many as have been pre-ordained unto life everlasting." (Acts 13., 48.) He prepared twelve men in a special manner by three years' private as well as public instruction and by performance of stupendous miracles in their presence for proof of His mission from His Father. After His death on the cross and His resurrection from the grave, He spent forty days in completing their instruction, "appearing to them, and speaking of the kingdom of God" (Acts 1c., 3v.); and finally, on the mountain of Galilee, at the moment of His ascension into heaven, He delivered this momentous commission to them, "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth; going, therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have given in charge to you: and behold! I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." (Matt., 28c.) The meaning is obvious, that this world-wide and everlasting mission was absolutely impossible of fulfilment by mere human agency, and that He alone to whom "all power is given in heaven and on earth" could work it out through His commissioned agents. Hence the preamble recites the omnipotence of Jesus Christ, "all power is given to me in heaven and on earth;" and the mandate refers to this omnipotence as the principle of assured efficiency, "going *therefore* teach"; and the promise of ever-present divine help, "Behold! I am with you all days," guarantees the success of the Apostolic ministry in the full measure of God's

predestination unto all nations and all generations of men "even to the consummation of the world." Wherefore it is folly to think that a man, because he has acquired a certain power of oratory or the art of attractive and fascinating speech, may take upon himself the office of propagating faith by the preaching of God's Word. There are men who traffic upon the credulity or curiosity of multitudes in this fashion, and make heaps of money by the delusion of simple people. But you know their discourses are not sermons, but rather lectures of entertainment for the rich and the idle. They are simply theatrical performances. One thing is certain: if the commission of Jesus Christ to "go and teach" has not been delivered to the preacher, the promise attached to the commission, "Behold, I am with you," shall not be fulfilled in him. His learned harangues, unhallowed by grace, shall be "as the sounding brass and the tinkling cymbal" (1 Cor., 13 c.); they may strike the ears of his auditory with rhetorical force, it may be with pleasure, but they shall convey no message of God to the soul. In this sense the Apostle of the Nations, addressing the Romans, who had mastered the world in philosophy and rhetoric, makes nothing of scholarly qualifications, and attributes all efficiency of preaching to Christ's grace energizing the commissioned preacher. "How shall they believe," said he, "if they do not hear? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent?" (Rom., 10c.) The mission from Jesus Christ, and His grace accompanying His commission, are as essential to the engendering and nourishing of faith in the people as the very announcement of the truths of revelation. In like sense he wrote to the Corinthians, "Christ sent me to preach the Gospel, not with wisdom of speech, lest the cross of Christ should be made void . . . And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not in loftiness of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of

Christ; that your faith might not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God" (1 Cor., 2 c.). Hence also that other word of St. Paul, by which he rebuked the vain glory of certain preachers who had claimed credit for the number of their converts: "Neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." (1 Cor., 3.) The planting and watering is done to-day by the apostolic ministry, just as in the days of St. Paul: but now, as then, it is God that giveth the increase.

In the Acts of the Apostles it is written that some of their hearers rejected their teaching whilst others accepted; and the sacred historian discriminates between the two classes of hearers by reference to an invisible agency of omnipotence working out its own eternal decrees: "As many believed as were foreordained unto everlasting life". (Acts 13 c.). All those of every congregation who had been foreordained unto life everlasting were effectively drawn to faith by God's invisible agency cooperating with the Apostolic ministry. Souls are to be saved by faith in our day and in "all days, even to the consummation of the world," by the successors of the Apostles in virtue of the same commission from the Saviour and the same promised help of omnipotence; and "as many as have been foreordained unto everlasting life" shall be brought to faith by God's grace interiorly acting upon their minds and hearts conjointly with the preaching and teaching of the Hierarchy. This, and this alone, is the supernatural faith whereby souls shall be saved in every age. God could indeed bestow his gift of faith without the help of man's preaching. Matthew, the Publican; Magdalen, the sinful woman; the dying thief on Calvary; Saul, the persecutor of the Church, were drawn to God in faith and love without the aid of preaching. But since Jesus Christ has been pleased to establish a perpetual Hierarchy for

delivery of His message of salvation to all men of all ages and nations, and has promised His presence and help to give effect to their ministry by attracting men to acceptance of their word in faith, and moreover has declared belief in them to be saving faith, and rejection of their doctrine to be damnation; it follows conclusively that acceptance of the teaching of the Apostolic Hierarchy is now and ever shall be the true order of faith and the divinely-appointed test for discriminating between soul-saving conviction, engendered by divine grace, and the thousand forms of erroneous human belief to which the term "faith" is vulgarly applied.

It is consequently of vital importance for men who value their souls' salvation to ask themselves, "Have we the true faith of Christ, by which alone we can be saved? Have we received our faith from the commissioned messengers of Christ? Perhaps we rest our belief on mere human assurances." In a matter so serious as this no risk should be run. There are hundreds of associations nowadays styled Christian churches, each of them professing to have the true faith. But one alone can have it: all the rest must necessarily be devoid of it. For among any number of contradictory systems of belief only one can be true. The one true faith of Christ is that which proceeds from divine grace silently moving men's souls to acceptance of the teaching of the successors of the Apostles.

SUPERNATURAL PREPARATION IS REQUISITE FOR
THE EPISCOPAL OFFICE.

The first care of a bishop is to rear up his spiritual children in faith, which is the original principle of all spiritual life, the "foundation and root of all justice."

Faith is not a natural product : it is not an intellectual theory, nor a system of philosophy : it is not derived from human reasoning, nor is it to be confounded with intellectual conviction. Intellectual conviction may belong to the Jew and heretic as well as to you. They are as intellectually convinced as you are, but they are intellectually convinced in error, while the faith of Jesus Christ must be in truth. Faith must have conviction ; otherwise it is not faith : but it must be a conviction impressed upon the soul by the grace of the Holy Spirit of God and founded entirely on the revelation of God. The only true and supernatural faith is the conviction sown in the soul by the delivery of God's message with the grace of God. It was to sow it and water it and nourish and guard it in the souls of men that Jesus Christ appointed the hierarchy, gave them their everlasting mission and sent them into all parts of the earth, filled with the omnipotence expressed in His promise that He, to whom "all power has been given in heaven and on earth," would be with them unto the end of time. Its germination in youth, its vigorous development in growing age, its fruitfulness in deeds of self-denying charity through life, its acceptance also by unbelievers in response to our preaching, these must ordinarily depend on a concurrence of graces flowing through the channels of sacerdotal ministration.

The instrument must be fitted for its work ; and the human agents whom God is pleased to employ for co-operation with Him in the sanctification and salvation of mankind by the generation of faith in men's souls must be prepared by communication of Supernatural powers for the adequate performance of this Supernatural work. This is most fully signified in the words addressed by Our Lord Jesus Christ to the Apostolic Body after His Resurrection : " As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When he said this, he breathed on

them, and he said to them : Receive ye the Holy Ghost." (John, 20 ch.). It was a communication of divine power for fulfilment of a divine work. To this St. Paul refers in proof of his Apostleship, when he asks the querulous Corinthians, "Am not I an Apostle? Are not you my work in the Lord? For you are the seal of my Apostleship in the Lord" (1 Cor., 9 c.). The necessity of supernatural preparation of the Hierarchy for the work of sanctification of men's souls through faith will be more clearly understood if we examine the inner ways of God's agency of grace and the manner of its cooperation with the Apostolic ministry.

GOD'S AGENCY OF GRACE WORKS IN THE BISHOP AND THROUGH THE BISHOP.

For you must not understand the co-operation of God with man and man with God in the work of human sanctification to be two separate agencies, one natural and the other supernatural, acting merely in harmony with one another, and each contributing its share towards the good result. Not at all. Philosophy, equally as Theology, repudiates such a theory. Both agents, if they concur in a work common to both and dependent on their joint agency, must of necessity operate in the same supernatural sphere in order to produce a common supernatural result. God and man are indeed distinct agents; but their sanctifying operation is one, and it is wholly supernatural. It is God working in man and through man by His own divine power and will, and the Bishop also working upon his fellowman through the impulse of his own will, it is true, but by the communicated power of God. Remember, therefore, that this agency of divine grace by which the souls of men are saved and sanctified is not an external adjunct or supplement.

tary help of the hierarchy ; it is God with them and within them. It is God working in and through us, the bishops of the Church, by His grace, and working also in cooperation with us upon the minds and hearts of our hearers. The apostle St. Paul never took to himself the credit of the success of his mission. He never said : It was I who converted a thousand people in Athens, the seat of Grecian philosophy, or in Rome, or Corinth, or Philippi. He gave the entire credit of the accomplished work to God, and only claimed credit to himself for having done his duty faithfully. It was by laboring, travelling and teaching, by exposing himself to attacks and dangers and loss, by submitting to the rigors of imprisonment and chains and scourging, by preaching in and out of season through day and night, and enduring patiently all sorts of insults and wrongs, that he worked out the salvation of the people. But while he claims this much credit for himself, he gives the glory of the accomplished work entirely to God. He says : "The grace of God in me hath not been void : I have labored more abundantly than all the other apostles ; yet (he adds) not I, but the grace of God with me " (1 Cor., 15 c.) That is a most remarkable sentence. Herein we recognize the two agents, the human and the divine. The good result is attributed to both ; to the man ministerially, and to God primarily ; to the labours of the Apostle in co-operation with grace, yet much more, nay wholly, to grace co-operating with the Apostle, abiding in him, energizing him, and working salvation unto millions through him. It is for the purpose of imparting this Apostolic grace and power to the Bishop elect of Peterboro, and transforming him into a supernatural instrument of divine agency in favor of his people, that the sacramental rite of consecration is administered to him to-day, as it has been ordained by Jesus Christ and practiced in His Church since the day of Pentecost. So essential is it to the Episcopal office that even the

Twelve Apostles, although they had received their commission from the mouth of the Son of God Himself, and the promise also that He would be with them always and everywhere in their work, were commanded by Him not to commence their mission until they should be transformed by the grace of the Holy Ghost into fitting agents of the power and wisdom and mercy of God in the spiritual and wholly supernatural order. "Stay ye in the city," said He, "until ye be endued with power from on high."...."ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon ye, and ye shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth." (Luke, 24 c. Acts, 1 c.)

So also in the case of Saul. He had been filled with revelation by the voice and look of the Lord Jesus speaking to him from out the lightning cloud as he approached the gates of Damascus, and had been declared "a vessel of election, to carry his Divine Master's name before the gentiles and Kings." (Acts, 9 c.) Nevertheless he did not dare to go forth to the nations or undertake to found a church anywhere till the choir of Bishops assembled around the altar of sacrifice in Antioch imposed hands on him, together with Barnabas, by express order of the Holy Ghost, for communication of Apostolic power and grace fitting them both for their ministry.

BISHOPS IN EVERY AGE ARE SACRAMENTALLY CONSECRATED.

Let it not be said that this transformation of man into a supernatural agency of salvation by the power and grace of the Holy Ghost was needed for the Apostles only, not for the Bishops who succeed them in the ministry. The work assigned them is humanly impossible at all times, and divine power alone can accomplish it in

the 19th century, as in the first. Therefore the same communication of grace was needed for the successors of the Apostles as for the Apostles themselves : and hence the Lord Jesus Christ has declared in the fullest and clearest manner of which language is capable that the commission given to " the Twelve " has been given by Him to their successors for all ages—for the 19th equally as for the first—and for the benefit of all the children of Redemption " even to the consummation of the world." (Matt., 28 chap.) Hence also the Catholic Church has administered the rite of sacramental consecration to every Bishop from the beginning. St. Paul consecrated Timothy Bishop of Ephesus, and Titus Bishop of Crete, and many others, by the imposition of hands, just as himself and Barnabas had been consecrated at Antioch. That heavenly grace, and power, and zeal, and fortitude, and other hierarchical virtues, were imparted by this rite of consecration, is patent in his letters addressed to two of those bishops. For instance, when he writes to Timothy, " I admonish thee, that thou stir up the grace of God which is *in* thee by the imposition of my hands " " Labor with the Gospel by the power of God " " Keep the good deposit by the Holy Ghost who dwelleth in us " " Be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus, &c." Wherefore, brethren, it is not the Bishop's learning or eloquence or zeal that begets faith in his hearers or preserves it in the souls of the children of the Church. It is the grace of God in the Bishop and with the Bishop, co-operating in his labours. It is by virtue of the supernatural preparation of the Bishop for this agency of grace, through sacramental orders, that the thoughts of his mind and the words of his mouth pass into the hearts of his hearers with divine force and fire of the Holy Spirit, who worketh in him and through him for illumination of mind and strengthening of will and mysterious attraction of souls to God through his holy ministration.

THE GRACE OF HIERARCHICAL GOVERNMENT.

Besides the guardianship of the sacred deposit of revealed truth and the propagation of spiritual life by faith, the government of souls in great number is committed to the bishop, to conduct them to God. Is not this a work for which the special succor of heaven and the grace of divine direction are most manifestly needed? How else could authority based on purely spiritual sanction, and appealing to conscience only for the enforcement of its laws, maintain a discipline of manifold restriction over men of flesh and blood, conquering nature's sensuality and the pride of life? Withdraw from the hierarchy the divine lights and helps promised them by Jesus Christ; let them be God's representatives before men in such manner only as the rulers of this world are, dependent on the general dispositions of Providence for the maintenance of their rule, and, think you, shall they continue long to bind the discordant elements of society in absolute unity of religious belief and subjection to one common law of morality and worship? Impossible. The downward tendencies of nature would more than counterbalance the force of spiritual maxims—the clashing of sentiment and rivalry of parties would evoke a tempest of passion, in whose din the mere human voice of the bishop would be completely inaudible; and thus the Church of the living God, whose divinity of origin is most conspicuously displayed in her undivided unity, would very soon be distracted by schism, and made the prey of heresy and unbelief. Witness what occurs in the sects around her on every side. The dignitaries whom they call bishops are day after day effectually resisted and put to silence on vital questions of dogma and discipline, not through insufficiency of learning or lack of zeal, but because they have no sacramental orders, no hierarchical grace. Would not a similar fate most surely befall the Catholic Church,

if her bishops were not divinely assisted, especially in an age of canonized revolt, when the ablest writers in the press are urged on by blind bigotry to sustain and defend, by artful suggestion and open advocacy, every cause, how unworthy soever, that has for its object the enfeebling of her authority in regard of her own children? Yea, brethren, among those by whom the episcopal mandate would be challenged, impugned, defied, some might be found whom the Church had reared up with special care for the service of the sanctuary, and who, on bended knees before the altar, in the same moment that they were clothed with the vesture of holiness, had placed both hands within those of the bishop, and vowed to him obedience and reverence, ratifying their vow with the kiss of peace. Be not disedified, brethren, if God permits a scandal of this kind to occur exceptionally, and at happily rare intervals; for by it men see and are plainly convinced how easily the bonds of Catholic communion, like those of purely human organizations, would be broken, did not He Himself protect them in the strength of His right arm upholding the crozier. It has been foretold that scandals must come, and that heresies must be: there is a limit however marked by divine decree, and beyond this they shall not progress. "Their speech," says St. Paul, "spreadeth like a cancer, and they have subverted the faith of some." The Apostle then adds: "But the sure foundation of God standeth firm, having this seal, the Lord knoweth who are his." (2 Tim., 2 ch.) The Church of the Crucified shall suffer persecutions and trials from without and from within, even as her Divine Founder did. It was He who said "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. If they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more his domestics? Therefore fear them not." (Matt., 10 c.). The Catholic Church never loses confidence in Jesus Christ. He said to her Hierarchy of all times, "Behold: I am with you," and she never

doubted His word, nor shall she ever. He is with the Bishops, not alone in the teaching of faith and the Baptism of believers and the incorporation of all tribes and tongues and peoples and nations into the unity of her fold, but in the enforcement also of the whole discipline of Christian life upon her children according to the terms of the Apostolic commission, "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have given in charge to you. Behold! I am with you all days." Some will resist the truth in ignorance, others shall err through infirmity. These the Bishop, acting on the advice of St. Paul to Timothy, will correct with modesty of rebuke, reproof, entreaty in all patience and doctrine. It may happen that some, through pride of intellect or perversity heart, will now and again stand out in open defiance of Episcopal authority and, like the Philistine of old, challenge the captains of the army of God to single combat. This rarely happens, thanks to our good God. But it is not unknown in Canada. It has to be met by the Bishop at the peril of his soul in the fulness of charity — not the charity of idle sentiment or timid submission to the ringleader of sedition, but the charity of brave defence of God's Church, regardless of personal trouble, of popular obloquy, of scandalous defamation and every other risk whatever. This is well-ordered charity, that holds the public safety and the fundamental rule of ecclesiastical unity precious beyond all price, to be preserved at any cost. It is remarkable that St. Paul in his letters to Bishops takes care to give them special admonition not to tolerate by any means defiance of their authority. To Titus he writes "Teach and exhort and rebuke with all authority; let no man despise thee;" and to Timothy "Let no man despise thy youth." (Tit., 2 c., 15 v. 1 Tim., 4 c., 12 v.) All else, whether it be ignorance or infirmity or folly has to be treated with tenderness; but open rebellion against the authority and power and grace of God vested in the Bishop, must be treated as an attempt to wrest the crozier

from his hand and bring the Church under subjection to lawlessness. In such case the admonition given by St. Paul to Timothy for correction of his natural timidity, applies to every Bishop. "I admonish thee that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee the by imposition of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power." . . . "Be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus. . . . Labor with the gospel by the power of God." These are the hierarchical graces of the order of Episcopate conferred by the rite Sacramental of which you are witness here to-day. May the Lord save bishops from the painful necessity of sternness in duty; but if the challenge of rebellion should unhappily come, their first duty is to hold firm the crozier, the symbol of divine authority, the safeguard of religious unity, the weapon of pastoral defence against the invaders of the fold who would scatter the sheep or snatch them out of Christ's hand. Let us never forget the word of divine promise, "Behold, I am with you all days." So active and intimate is Christ's presence with the Hierarchy, that He makes their acts of administration His own: "He who hears you", said He "hears me: and he who despises you, despises me" (Luke, 10 c., 16 v.). Furthermore, in authorizing them to lay bonds upon the souls of men who deserve condemnation, He adopts their judgments before, hand and declares them ratified in heaven (Matt., 18 c.). "And, in fine, whoso will not hear the church", said he, "let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican" (Matt., 18 ch.). So conscious was St. Paul of this indwelling of Christ's Spirit in the Hierarchy for the purposes of salutary government, that he did not hesitate to enforce his admonitions and threats of chastisement against unruly Christians by affirming that they were the utterances of Christ Himself speaking through him. "If I come again, I will not spare. Do you seek a proof of Christ, who speaketh in me?" (2 Cor., 13 c.). This is the "power from on high" with which the first

Bishops were indued in the cenacle of Jerusalem, and which was imparted to Saul and Barnabas in the sanctuary at Antioch, and is transmitted to all Bishops, even as to them, by Sacramental consecration.

THE EPISCOPAL POWER OF CONFIRMING AND ORDAINING.

Yet another and greater grace must be given to the bishop, to fit him for his office. The choice gifts of the Holy Spirit reserved to the Sacrament of Confirmation are ordained for the preservation and development of faith. Those attached to the Sacrament of Holy Orders are necessary for the perpetuation of the priesthood, in living, visible presence, among the faithful everywhere, in the village and on mountain-side, as well as in the populous city. To the bishops, the chief rulers of the Church, and successors of the Apostles, the power of administering these Sacraments must belong for the sanctification of God's people. In the exclusive possession of this superior sacramental virtue the Episcopate is distinguished from the inferior orders of the hierarchy. It is the plenitude of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, whose entire power of sanctification is vested ministerially in the bishop. Wherefore, as Jesus, the Son of Mary, derived all His sanctifying power from the consecration of His humanity by the unction of the Divinity in hypostatic union, so also must the bishop be consecrated with divine unction derived from the Incarnation, to enable him to fulfil the whole priestly office of Christ in the Church. And now the Spirit of God, whose breath is life, exerts his creative power on the soul of the bishop elect. When He rested upon the waters of chaos in the beginning, they acquired a mysterious virtue, enduring throughout all time, for the production of animal life in countless variety and beauty of form. In the creation of a bishop

His operation is upon a nobler subject, the soul of man, for the propagation of a higher life, the life of the children of God in grace. He descends invisibly, and overshadows the soul under the imposition of hands. He rests upon it during the solemn Invocation and anointing with Chrism. It is a soul already sanctified ; he sanctifies it more. It is a soul already marked with the indelible character of Christ's priesthood ; He engraves that character more perfectly upon it, tracing the lines anew in greater brightness and holier unction. Before God and His angels, for time and eternity, the bishop's soul is adorned and hallowed by this luminous impress, encircled with seven-fold grace, denoting his possession of Christ's eternal priesthood in the fulness of the order of Melchisedech. All the sanctifying agency of the New and Eternal Testament—all sacrificial, sacramental, doctrinal and governmental powers, with corresponding graces and pledges of divine succour, as occasion may require, are now vested in him for adequate fulfilment of his office in feeding and ruling and governing the flock of Christ unto life eternal. By the ministry of the Archbishop celebrant, and his assistant bishops, this change is wrought in the soul of the Bishop-elect. They impose hands upon him, and invoke heavenly benediction and sanctification and consecration. They pour out upon his head the horn of holy chrism, at once a sign and instrument of sacerdotal grace, infinitely more sacred than that which flowed down the beard of Aaron, the High Priest of the Old Testament. But it is the Third Person of the Adorable Trinity that gives effect to their ministrations. He it is who, inwardly and in truth, blesses and sanctifies and consecrates the Bishop-elect in the fulness of sacerdotal unction and constitutes him a High Priest in the likeness of the great High Priest of the New Testament, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whom he shall visibly represent henceforth, in power of grace and truth and government, in propitia-

tion and healing and copious blessing. To hold this power of Jesus Christ over the faithful, with the charge to use it as the Saviour Himself would use it, for the benefit of all and each unto life everlasting, involves a responsibility of the gravest kind. Well may the Bishop-elect confess to himself his weakness, and turning to God, like Solomon, in holy fear, invoke the Divine assistance: "God of my Fathers and Lord of Mercy! give me wisdom that sitteth by Thy throne. Send her out of Thy holy heaven and from the throne of Thy majesty, that she may be with me, and labor with me, that I may know what is acceptable with Thee. She shall lead me soberly in my work, and shall preserve me by her power, and I shall govern Thy people justly." (Wisdom, 9 ch.). And as the Holy Scripture relates, that "God gave to Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart," so may He be pleased to pour out copiously these divine gifts on him who shall have chief care of the fold of Peterboro' for years to come; that the sacrament which marks him interiorly with the character of Christ's priesthood in perfect image, and imparts to him the power of sacerdotal government, may communicate to him likewise the fulness of the spirit of Christ's rule for the beneficial exercise of his authority. Wherefore, for the Bishop's sake, let us pray; and let us pray also for our own sake (because it concerns us all), that the spirit of Christ may descend on him this day in overflowing benediction, as it did upon the first Apostles in the Cenacle of Jerusalem, and upon St. Paul and St. Barnabas at Antioch, by imposition of hands; and that by faithful co-operation he may cause it to fructify in all spiritual good amongst us. Amen.



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